

Protect trees- growing assets

These winter months in Michigan are the perfect time to have trees on your property maintained. January, February and March are prime times to have professional pruning done. Depending upon the weather, of course, (January was warmer than usual; we may have snow in March and cold weather, and then again sometimes it is sweeter weather), one must do the chores according to Mother Nature's schedule.

It is best to have valuable trees pruned when they are dormant, before the buds break in early spring. It is true that trees can be pruned most anytime during the year, but the dormant period is the preferred season.

Abs, cuts and exposure are especially susceptible to certain insect and disease infestations. If they are pruned during dormancy, the possibility of that happening is greatly reduced.

Perhaps you are afraid that the pruners can't see or recognize the dead wood when the foliage is off, but believe me, they are trained to do just that. During cold weather professionals can move heavy equipment onto the lawn without damaging it in order to reach the branches that need pruning.

TREES ARE living, growing assets on your property. Besides providing beauty, they provide shade,



down to earth

Marty Figley

nesting places and food for birds and animals — even a nice sturdy branch on which to hang a child's swing. Trees add value that once gone, takes many, many years to replace. Many shade trees grow less than two feet per year, and the cost of planting a very large tree is prohibitive to most homeowners.

Preventive maintenance for these wonderful plants that we sometimes take for granted, such as a regular schedule of pruning, fertilizing and watering is as important as having the lawn mowed or the house painted.

Trees need to be fertilized to help them remain healthy, much the same way that we take vitamins. The results can't be seen immediately, but healthier trees will result. They will be less prone to disease and insect problems. Unhealthy, weak trees are attacked first and are more susceptible to damage.

For three years our spring weather has been very mild and drought conditions have existed. Arborists believe that the spring dryness and the severe drought of the last two summers will continue to take its toll for the next two years. A regular schedule of deep watering will insure that trees will continue to func-

tion as nature intended.

Inspection of the trees on your property can help identify potential problems such as storm damage, invading diseases and/or insects before irreversible harm is done. If a tree is deteriorating, the treatment takes much longer and is more expensive than the cost of regular care and a diseased tree can spoil the best landscaping. If there is storm damage, professional arborists can often save it by measures such as creative pruning. What better way to protect your investment?

HAVE YOU considered the value of a tree? I recently spoke with George Lee, president of Branch Tree Service in Royal Oak, and a member of the National Arborist Association. He said that in this area, a shade, ornamental and/or evergreen tree with a trunk 12 inches in diameter can range in value from \$1,500-2,500, under normal conditions. It is wise to document these growing assets with photographs or videos.

Give your trees the care they deserve. They give so much and are so important in the whole scheme of nature. And give yourself peace of mind, knowing that you have done your best in this regard.

Rose fanciers to meet

The February meeting of the Detroit Rose Society will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday in the Tel Twelve Mall Community Center Meeting Room.

The program, presented by Doug and Judy Bell, will be a slide presentation featuring roses from the 1988

fall national convention in Tampa, Fla. Other rose slides of varieties old and new will be included. Public is welcome at no charge.

The Mall is at the corner of Telegraph and 12 Mile, Southfield.

Meeting in Farmington Hills

The state meeting of the Michigan Division of the Woman's National Farm and Garden Association will be held Wednesday, March 1, at the Botsford Inn of Farmington Hills.

Maureen Kay, president, will be the hostesses for the meeting, which begins at 9 a.m. Garden writer Betty Frankel will be the featured speaker following the luncheon.

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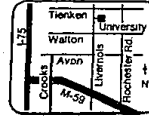
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